

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3, 9-15 and 17 have been allowed. Claims 16 and 17 have been amended. Thus, claims 1, 3 and 9-17 are pending in the present application. No new matter has been added. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the present rejection in view of the comments presented herein are respectfully requested.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e)/§ 103(a)

Claim 16 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by, or in the alternative under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), as being unpatentable over, Kawasato et al. (US 2003/0049456). Claim 16 as amended depends on allowed claim 12 which is both novel and nonobvious in view of this reference. Thus, claim 16 should also be allowable.

In view of comments presented above, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §§102(b) and/or 103(a).

CONCLUSION

Applicants submit that all claims are in condition for allowance. However, if minor matters remain, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number provided below.

Respectfully submitted,

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